



HOUSE
BUDGET
REPUBLICANS

Budget Digest

Ranking Member Steve Womack

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HOUSE BUDGET REPUBLICANS 116TH CONGRESS PRIORITIES

The 116th Congress gavelled in on January 3, 2019. House Budget Republicans are committed to working as a team to address exploding debts and deficits driven by mandatory spending and to enact bipartisan budget and appropriations process reforms.

Addressing Exploding Mandatory Spending. Today, our debt stands at roughly \$22 trillion with deficits expected to reach \$1.5 trillion in fiscal year (FY) 2028 and total \$12.4 trillion over the next 10 years. Mandatory spending consumes the largest share of our country's spending.

Also referred to as direct spending, most of the programs run on effectively permanent authorizations and do not require annual appropriations. Without congressional intervention, mandatory spending will continue to grow from \$2.5 trillion in 2018 to \$4.5 trillion in 2028, consuming 77 percent of total spending and accounting for roughly 15.2 percent of GDP by FY 2028.

For years, House Republicans have called for real action to deal with the skyrocketing growth of mandatory spending. In the FY 2019 budget, *Budget for a Brighter American Future*, House Budget Republicans began to turn the tide by adopting thoughtful reforms to programs driving our debt and deficits. If the nation's current fiscal situation remains unchanged, the future of these programs is bleak. Social Security Disability Insurance will be insolvent in 2025, and the Social Security Old Age and Survivors Insurance Trust Fund will be insolvent in 2032. Additionally, Medicare Part A Hospital Insurance will be insolvent in 2026, while Medicare Part B Medical Insurance is failing. Despite that on their current paths these programs are in peril, the new House majority has proposed to drastically expand such programs, making them more fiscally unstable and further threatening America's solvency. In the 116th Congress, the Committee's Republican members will continue to advocate for reforms that ensure future generations will not face the unthinkable choices that could cripple our economy and adversely affect every American family.

Budget Process Reform. The power of the purse is the most important responsibility granted to Congress by the Constitution. To fund the Federal Government through regular order, Congress must pass a final budget resolution followed by 12 separate appropriations bills before the end of the fiscal year, which begins on October 1. This has not been done since FY 1995.

The federal budget and appropriations process is clearly broken. Congress has therefore become reliant on continuing resolutions (CRs) or omnibuses, creating uncertainty about government funding or forcing a government shutdown, as the Federal Government is partially experiencing today. In the last Congress, then House Budget Committee Chairman Steve Womack and Ranking Member John Yarmuth introduced H.R. 7191, the *Bipartisan Budget and Appropriations Process Reform Act of 2018*. This legislation called for critical reforms to begin to improve the federal funding process to ensure Congress completes its budget work on time. Budget process reform will remain a priority for Committee Republicans in the 116th Congress, and members will seek bipartisan partnerships to achieve this goal.

"For years, the Federal Government's finances have reflected irresponsibility and imbalance, manifested today in nearly \$22 trillion of debt. Paired with partisan division and a process that handicaps the fulfillment of our most important constitutional duty—the power of the purse, our country is on a dangerous slope."

"Last year, I was honored to lead efforts to address the very real fiscal challenges that cast a shadow of doubt on America's future prosperity and look for bipartisan solutions to fix the problems that plague the budget process and render Congress unable to meaningfully address our debt. As Ranking Member of the House Budget Committee in the 116th Congress, I will continue to champion these most critical issues and look forward to working with Democrats and Republicans alike to fix the broken budget process."



- Ranking Member Steve Womack, January 3, 2019